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Sport-for-Development and the struggle for Subaltern Voices to be recognised: a response to Manley, Morgan and Atkinson

Abstract

In their article entitled '*Mzungu!': implications of identity, role formation and programme delivery in the sport for development movement*', Manley, Morgan and Atkinson (2016) focus on constructions of volunteer identities using Goffman's (1990) dramaturgical analysis of social interactions. Their empirical work is based on an international volunteering placement within the sport-for-development (SfD) sector in Zambia. The authors highlight social interactions between UK student volunteers and host country social actors as encounters that influence volunteer identity, role formation or identity disruption. We offer a response to their article with particular attention to critiquing the knowledge production and programme development approaches employed to undertake research among economically marginalised communities. We draw on postcolonial theory (Escobar 1995) and Long's actor-oriented approach to enable capturing of alternative narratives in SfD research. To support our critical response to the limited application of the dramaturgical perspective by Manley *et al.*, we further apply four of Goffman's perspectives to analyse social establishments. By so doing, we bring to the fore social processes within which the agency of local social actors' are neglected by Manley *et al.* Instead, the authors state their sampling limitations. We argue that it is the responsibility of privileged intellectuals in global North institutions to reach out to subaltern voices rather than resorting to stating limitations of sampling techniques. Such limitations simply extend the marginalisation of global South voices and exacerbate asymmetrical powers which enable those with resources to undertake SfD research to define the 'other'.

Keywords: sport-for-development; subaltern voice; hegemony; student volunteer; dramaturgical perspective; identity; social interaction

Introduction

In the article entitled, *'Mzungu!': implications of identity, role formation and programme delivery in the sport for development movement*, Manley, Morgan and Atkinson (2016) examine the individual experiences of UK student volunteers who undertook a 6-week placement working with Education through Sport ('EduSport') and Sport in Action ('SIA') in Zambia. In particular, Manley *et al.* highlight challenges associated with notions of identity negotiation, and the (re)constructions of identity that impact upon the 'lived experiences' of UK Higher Education (HE) student volunteers partaking in sport-for-development (SfD)ⁱ work. The authors explore concepts of 'role formation' and 'identity disruption' (Goffman 1990) reflecting upon social interactions between the student volunteers and local Zambian communities. Their article utilises a theoretical application of Goffman's interactionist perspective to analyse the experiences of individual volunteers and their respective active negotiations regarding personal identity whilst 'acting out' volunteer roles. Their contribution intends to 'encourage further debate and examination that seeks to uncover the interplay of human agency, as opposed to structure, when critically reflecting upon developmental work' (Manley *et al.*, 2016, p. 385). We acknowledge their contribution as a new perspective to SfD research as they focus on the 'identity' of (foreign) volunteers. Therefore, we hope that our response to their article can further the insights they have provided and also bring something new to the debate by addressing some limitations we note in their approaches to researching SfD practices in the global South.

Our response to Manley *et al.* (2016) is underpinned by a recently completed evaluation of what was then UK Sport's 'International Development through

Excellence and Leadership in Sport' ('IDEALS') programme (Banda 2015). The characteristics of the IDEALS programme appear little different from the anonymised programme that Manley *et al.* based their research on. Similar to Manley *et al.*'s international placement context, IDEALS offers a 6-week volunteer experience for students selected from seven UK universities, positioning them within communities identified by two Zambian indigenous SfD NGOs, SIA and EduSport.

Our article revisits and responds to the findings in Manley *et al.* and encourages further scholarly contributions that remain mindful of potential limitations that arise when certain concepts, theories and methodological approaches are applied in SfD research. In so doing, we summarise and compare key findings from empirical and conceptual scholarship (e.g., Darnell and Hayhurst 2011, 2012, Lindsey and Grattan 2012), with focus on advancing the particular agenda within SfD research regarding the representation of those in deprived communities by privileged researchers from the global North. We propose using findings from the IDEALS project evaluation (Banda 2015) to not only contribute to the theoretical and methodological concerns raised by Manley *et al.*, but also highlight how their contribution may exacerbate global North hegemonic concerns. By so doing, our critique addresses both hierarchical knowledge production and hierarchical programme development recognised in the authors' contribution and in wider SfD research (see Darnell 2007).

Our response begins by summarising the key theoretical arguments that Manley *et al.* identify as hindering the progressive contributions that SfD as a sector can make towards development in general. Subsequently, further theoretical discussion focuses on human agency, particularly, the voices of subalterns (Kapoor 2004, Hall 2007) within SfD research. Thereafter, we discuss the methodological approaches in SfD using the IDEALS process evaluation as an alternative approach to capturing

perspectives that are marginalised in knowledge production. We then highlight four key aspects of social establishments (Goffman 1990) and the social interactions that manifest within IDEALS programmes as a social establishment. We conclude by stressing the responsibility that we have as SfD scholars regarding partial representation or biases in our scholarly work.

Hegemony and Representation in Sport-for-Development

Manley *et al.* join other scholars (Coalter 2010, Darnell 2010, Forde 2013, Hayhurst 2014) who have highlighted limitations which have bedevilled sport as a tool for development. Notwithstanding its recognition as a cost-effective tool (United Nations 2003) and an alternative response to the failings of development programmes, the authors point out the lack of tangible evidence and lack of theoretical application identified by several SfD scholars (Guest 2009, Spaaij 2009, Coalter 2010). First and foremost, Manley *et al.* (2016, p. 384) identify how SfD is 'a response to previous development programmes'. As such, development agencies and NGOs utilise sport as a non-traditional means to an end and one through which they hypothesise achievement of their goals using sport as an alternative method. Manley *et al.* posit that international development *through* sport remains contentious in a conceptual, theoretical and practical regard. As Black (2010, p. 122) has remarked, theoretically, the continuity of 'local' SfD initiatives is a 'hybrid' of in-context notions of social and economic development and 'universal' worldviews imparted by longstanding traditional international development agencies. Within SfD literature (Lindsey and Banda 2010, Straume 2013), emphasis has been placed on the instrumental role that international development agencies have played regarding the emergence of SfD organisations.

Manley *et al.* rightly cite critical SfD literature which argues that knowledge production is hierarchical, from a single narrative, that of the global North, applied to global South developmental interventions (Darnell 2007, Mwaanga 2013). They posit that within the SfD movement, a network of global North partners dominate the development discourse. Global North dominance in both SfD hierarchical programme development and knowledge production (Darnell 2007, Mwaanga 2010, Nicholls *et al.* 2011) stems from the influence of international development agencies. Academics or expert practitioners usually appointed to monitor and evaluate development projects in low-income countries are located in close proximity to funders of such programmes in the global North (Nicholls *et al.* 2011). Within the SfD movement and mainstream development in Zambia, these funders have consisted, but not exclusively, of the Department for International Development (DfID), Norwegian Agency for Development (NORAD), and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). These governmental development agencies have been instrumental in funding both SIA and EduSport to deliver SfD programmes within deprived communities in Zambia through their respective country-specific sports agencies namely: UK Sport, Norwegian Olympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF) and Commonwealth Games Canada. Due to the SfD movement's strong association with mainstream development agendas or donor-country priorities, the SfD movement cannot be insulated from critiques of postcolonial as well as neo-liberal discourses identified prevalently within the development studies field. Manley *et al.* cite how SfD authors (Hayhurst 2009, Darnell 2012, Forde 2013) have applied postcolonial theory and, more specifically, Antonio Gramsci's hegemony theory, to expose these dominant power relation practices within the SfD movement.

Empirical and conceptual SfD literature certainly supports the argument found in Manley *et al.* (2016, p. 383-5) which states that theory needs to be applied to SfD research for critical perspectives of development programmes to form. However, their choice and utilisation of a symbolic interactionist perspective impacts how they also critically discuss growing application of postcolonial theory within SfD research. For example, a body of SfD literature (Darnell and Hayhurst 2011, Forde 2013, Mwaanga and Mwansa 2014) has applied postcolonial theory that originates from wider development studies (Kapoor 2009, McEwan 2009) to highlight how SfD organisations relate to practices that characterise mainstream development institutions. Manley *et al.* cite and discuss postcolonial theory but do not apply it practically to their study. Specifically, their argument quickly departs from noteworthy calls for postcolonial SfD scholarship (e.g., Kay 2009, Black 2010, Darnell and Hayhurst 2011, 2012) and instead uses micro-sociological theory, symbolic interactionism. Despite awareness of such ‘dominant power relations that guide the current [SfD] movement’ (Manley *et al.*, 2016, p. 384), the authors seem to exacerbate this global North dominance in knowledge production as will be demonstrated subsequently. To support our critique of hierarchical knowledge production, our discussion in the section that follows introduces the concept of ‘subalterns’ (Spivak, 1988) from postcolonial theory.

‘Muting’ Subaltern Voices in Sport-for-Development Research

The purpose of this section is to explore how global South voices are positioned within SfD research (Darnell 2010, Lindsey and Grattan 2012, Hayhurst 2014, Holmes, Banda and Chawansky 2015). Underpinned by both postcolonial and development studies on power, our use of the term ‘subaltern’ centres on the exclusion of the ‘other’ from the production of development discourse (Hall 2007).

This conceptualisation depicts global North dominance in ways of knowing and the neglect of alternative knowledges or voices that are not from the global North (see Spivak 1988). The section purposes to show how Manley *et al.* continue to ‘mute’ subaltern voices whilst advocating for ‘collecting the differentiated perspectives from a broader range of aid recipients’ (2016, p. 398). Paramount to both hierarchical programme development and knowledge production is the lack of, or partial engagement of, the voices of deprived communities.

Growth in SfD research has evidenced application of wider paradigms and theory that explain broader trends beneath which SfD policy and practice operates. In this regard, Darnell and Hayhurst (2011) demand that SfD research design be aligned with postcolonial literature from international development (e.g. Nederveen Pieterse 2010). By so doing, it will help to ‘decolonize’ the ethos, values and beliefs that permeate institutional policy, governance and practice while also impacting NGO programme design and delivery. Connecting these factions of scholarly practice, Darnell and Hayhurst (2011, p.187) declare how scholars must be ‘attuned to decolonization’ by way of ‘self-reflection’ against dominant development discourse within official policy and governance. However, like other SfD studies (Darnell 2010) pursuing an understanding of SfD practices and notions of hegemony, Manley *et al.* place emphasis on global North voices only. This limits their deconstruction of development discourses that persist in SfD programmes as they draw their data mainly from a selection of ‘four, white British (three females, Gemma, Jamie and Beth, and one male, Peter), University students (aged 19–21)’ who they believe ‘could elicit information-rich cases to provide data with which to analyse the SDP process and the participants’ experiences therein’ (2016, p. 387). As SfD research continues to be indissolubly related to global North dominance, power and control,

'decolonisation' implies giving marginalised, deprived or indigenous communities the right to self-determination, and not to disempower communities through global North aspirations for academic career gain (see Smith 1999).

Despite SfD research (Darnell 2007, 2012, Hayhurst 2009, Darnell and Hayhurst 2011, Hayhurst, MacNeill and Frisby 2011) stressing the application of postcolonial and hegemony theory to knowledge production, Manley *et al.* still proceed to adopt development practices that fail to promote a 'counter-hegemonic' approach. Being aware of the literature on hegemonic practices in the SfD movement, a counter-hegemonic approach would be one that seeks to redress the marginalisation of subaltern voices. However, their skewed selection of practitioners' voices rather subjugates alternative voices. Hence, empirical SfD research that includes primarily global North voices (Darnell 2010a, Manley *et al.*, 2016) appears limited in scope due to being unable to fully explore the viewpoints of stakeholders from specific global South localities. Other approaches which involve global South actors as co-researchers (Lindsey, Namukanga, Kakomwe and Grattan 2010, Lindsey *et al.* 2015) included local or alternative voices in research design, data collection and knowledge production. Such actions are only effective when active engagement renders the subaltern voices as agenda-shaping powers and not only as a form of tokenistic involvement of local communities.

Manley *et al.* (2016, p. 386) call for a change that favours alternative voices to be heard in shaping their own development when they assert that SfD research should:

...move towards a critically constructed vision for [SfD], with particular emphasis on engaging the marginalized voices of those within local African communities, [to] allow for an improved understanding of the processes, procedures and outcomes for development programmes inequality.

This reflexivity position has been echoed loudly within the SfD sector and by continuing to pay lip-service to it defeats their claim to a 'transformative vision' (see Hartmann and Kwauk 2011, Darnell 2012) which the authors deem central to progressive developments:

Of fundamental importance to this transformative vision is the ability to capture and (re)present the perspective of those involved with the programme (Manley et al., 2016, p. 386)

Progressive steps on practices of representing subaltern voices in critical SfD research and policy development should reflect a substantial degree of how the subaltern voices have influenced and shaped policy discussions (see Kapoor 2004). Indeed, to provide 'an apt portrayal of the micro-practices' shaping SfD delivery (Manley et al., 2016, p. 386), SfD requires self-reflexivity on the part of those with privileged powers to include or exclude alternative knowledges.

Darnell and Hayhurst (2011, p. 115) observe that it is vital to recognise the agency of the marginalised in 'carving out' identities as development is never experienced homogeneously by subalterns. Despite this development in SfD research, Manley et al. treat the single subaltern voice as homogeneously representative when the authors generalise their claims affirming that:

*Acquiring knowledge from **site coordinators** emphasized the necessity of analysing SDP from the position of the global South (Manley, et al. 2016, p. 393)*

By utilising one site coordinator to demonstrate 'insight into the Zambian perceptions' of role behaviour' (ibid, p. 392), the authors seem to neglect the heterogeneity of placement sites or spaces, and subsequently treat development as undifferentiated despite their 'emphasis upon collecting the differentiated perspectives from a broader range of aid recipients' (ibid, p. 398). Furthermore, despite emphasising the

necessity to obtain 'accurate and more comprehensive perspectives of the social processes that guide development programmes' (ibid, p. 393), Manley *et al.* rather chose to 'mute' voices such as those of SfD managerial staff, local peer leaders, school staff, community local leaders, and health centre chief medical officers. These are key actors located within social establishments which serve as placement sites. The 'muted' voices can provide a greater account of the specificities of local conditions (Briggs and Sharp 2004) and influence how volunteers' identify themselves while among development beneficiaries and local experts. In fact, this representation of the 'other' through 'Northern' eyes is problematic as it, evidently, permeates all the findings Manley *et al.* report. Spivak (1988) and Saffari (2016, p. 40), within a mainstream development context, question the ability of the 'hegemonic ear' to hear the voices of the subaltern speaking. We deem Manley *et al.*'s limited inclusion of alternative voices as exacerbating the neglect of local agency to resist or contest hegemonic power and representation.

While we acknowledge the authors' contributions as providing insight into how individual volunteers shape their identities, their approach was likely to benefit from undertaking critical analyses of the socially negotiated processes of interactions that would allow the subaltern voices to be heard (Saffari 2016). Although their intention was to utilise global North voices to interpret UK volunteers' own 'lived experiences', Manley *et al.*'s contribution occupies a discursive space which also defines and constructs representations of global South communities. For example, an alternative narratives could have helped challenge the portrayal of local communities as 'passive others' (Manley *et al.* 2016, p 389) and the depiction of 'aid recipients as inferior or less able' (ibid, p 387). Whilst the authors gaze is on UK volunteers, their findings depict continuity in 'othering' discourses particularly when the authors

reiterate 'that the portrayals of local Zambians, and their expectations, are guided by an interpretation that stems from the [UK] volunteers own reading of their experiences' (ibid, p. 390). Furthermore, Manley *et al.* explicitly state how their 'paper is limited in its acquisition of only one voice from the host community' (2016, p. 398). Rightly so, this raises questions regarding the responsibility of privileged intellectuals in the global North (Saffari 2016, Larsen 2016). For example, the authors do not consider the wider role played by local volunteers known as youth peer leaders (e.g. see Nicholls 2009, Jeanes 2013,) who are missing from their presentation of social interactions. These social actors all play a role in either managing or conversely contributing to the exacerbation of unrealistic expectations placed upon international development volunteers. Hence, we argue that adherence to tenets posited as part of how Goffman (1961, 1990) theorises notions of 'self-representation' need not prohibit inclusion of a variety of global South stakeholders from Manley *et al.*'s research sample group.

Towards Decolonised Methodological Approaches in the SfD Movement

In this section, we continue to posit that advancements in decolonising the SfD movement (Darnell 2007, Hayhurst 2009, Darnell 2010, Hayhurst, McNeill and Frisby 2011) demand methodological developments similar to those that continue to take place in mainstream development studies field. One of which is the need to give scholarly attention to the sensitivities of identifying and supporting decolonising practices in programme development and knowledge production (see Smith 1999, McEwan 2009). Progressively, with regards to the transformation of SfD research, our response to Manley *et al.* draws its arguments from our IDEALS programme evaluation research (Banda 2015). This was a UK Sport commissioned evaluation of

the 10 years of the IDEALS programme in Zambia that purposed to capture the voices of a wide range of stakeholders involved with the programme.

More specifically, Manley *et al.* (2016, p. 386) profess that ‘the ability to capture and (re)present the perspective of those involved with the programme’ is of fundamental importance to developing a ‘transformative vision’ in SfD research. As Hartmannn and Kwauk (2011, p. 296) propose, ‘transformative development must begin [with research] interrogating the relations of power underlying sport-based interventions’ as gathered from the perspective of all (local and foreign) programme stakeholders. Similar to Manley *et al.* (2016), preceding IDEALS programme evaluations (Powell 2011) placed their gaze on UK student volunteers’ experiences at the expense of local voices to inform SfD practice and scholarship. Instead, we present an approach which is cognizant of scholarly recommendations to ‘decolonise’ the theoretical and methodological approaches within development (McEwan 2009 in development studies, Forde 2008, Darnell and Hayhurst 2011 in the SfD movement).

Therefore, the methodological approach we draw upon adopts a wider, more inclusive, sampling frame influenced by Norman Long’s (2001) actor-oriented approach. Long’s actor-oriented approach places strong emphasis on understanding the role of actors in shaping and creating their own social world. Hence, our contribution enhances depth in the representation of findings that focus on

[...] processes by which specific actors and networks of actors engage with and thus co-produce their own (inter)personal and collective social worlds.

(Long, 2001, p. 3)

Long (2003, p. 49) further contends that ‘social life is heterogeneous or polymorphic’ and places human agency at the centre of knowledge production. By way of utilising

the actor-oriented approach, we argue that there are other different perspectives that can be generated from listening to a wide range of social actors. By way of application of Long's (2001) actor-oriented approach, we intend to demonstrate that our contribution strives to offer 'local identities' a voice while remaining mindful of global political forces at play (see Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011, p.187). By so doing, we bring to the debate a nuanced and balanced approach to advancing postcolonial debate and practical approaches within SfD scholarship (Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011, Kay 2009).

Guided by an interpretivist epistemology, Manley *et al.* (2016, p. 385) point out that it is important:

...to capture the negotiations, interactions and communications that exist between the practitioner and the recipients of the programme within the local communities.

We commend the authors for their intentions as they clearly demonstrate their theoretical acknowledgement of the importance of capturing such social interactions or negotiations. However, critical praxis is lacking since the authors' translation of theory into practice falls short of adequate practical examples. For example, Manley *et al.* (2016, p. 387) pursue 'a dramaturgical perspective of interaction (Goffman 1961, 1990), [to] highlight the concept of impression management and its importance in relation to social interaction'. Manley *et al.* use this approach to interrogate 'the construction of identities and the delivery of SDP work' (2016, p. 387). The *dramaturgical perspective* (of symbolic interactionism) focuses on micro-level interpersonal interactions rather than macro-level relations. Goffman (1959) sees such micro-level human interactions as a grand play, a theatre stage upon which individuals convey impressions to those around them. Despite symbolic

interactionism's limitation, lacking an adequate macro or conflict view of society (see Molnar and Kelly, 2013), Manley *et al.* not only neglect to acknowledge this limitation but also neglect to apply Goffman's other four perspectives used to study social establishments, namely technical, political, structural, and cultural perspectives. It is those other four perspectives which we use to further elaborate the limitations in Manley *et al.*

Goffman's proposed framework posits that 'a social establishment is any place surrounded by fixed barriers to perception in which a particular kind of activity regularly takes place (1959, p. 231). He further proposes that social establishments can be analysed from the four perspectives named above. A social establishment can be viewed from a '*technical*' perspective by focusing on its 'efficiency and inefficiency' in relation to its (organisational) predefined objectives. An establishment can also be viewed from a '*political*' perspective based on social controls or power which guide actions and sanctions. The '*structural*' perspective of analysing an establishment relates to the 'horizontal and vertical' social relations among groups and the different levels of status attached to groups. And lastly, social establishments can be '*culturally*' analysed in terms of moral values influencing organisational activities such as customs, politeness, or decorum (ibid, p. 231-234). Goffman further added the dramaturgical approach that Manley et al. employed in their analysis as a fifth perspective.

Methodological Approaches

Qualitative approaches consisting of semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were used in the IDEALS evaluation in order to gather a wide range of social actors' perspectives. (Flick 2006). A combination of face-to-face and

telephone semi-structured interviews were conducted with purposively selected (Patton 2002) key stakeholders comprising of: SfD NGO managers; participating UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs); UK Sport's International Development department officials; International Inspirationⁱⁱ officials; local Zambian state and non-state placement providers; national sports federations; IDEALS spin-off charities; volunteer alumni and frontline delivery personnel (UK Volunteers, group leaders, youth peer leaders). The data gathering took place between July and September 2015 consisting of 14 face-to-face interviews, 6 telephone interviews and 4 focus groups discussions.

Insert Table 1 here

All interviews were conducted by the first author (this article), who is a native Zambian. His proficiency in two local languages (Nyanja and Bemba) commonly used in Lusaka enabled him to code-switch, putting Zambian interviewees at ease. The ability to code-switch enabled the collection of in-depth information and also provided an opportunity to seek further clarification using a native language.

However, despite the ethnicity and nationality of the first author, his proximity to SfD funders such as UK Sport can potentially limit the depth of criticality local social actors apply to discussing personal or organisational relationships with either global North actors or agencies, respectively.

After the collection and transcription of the data were completed, thematic analysis was conducted through an iterative and inductive process (Fielding and Thomas 2008). This consisted of initial coding and then going back and forth through the coded data, connecting and interrelating data to enable interpretations to be formed.

Analysing IDEALS as a Social Establishment using Goffman's theory

Goffman's four perspectives will be applied to the key social processes that form regular activities that occur within the IDEALS programme. These regular social processes comprise of: *recruitment, induction and programme delivery mechanisms*. Recruitment and induction are social processes that are undertaken before student volunteers have physical contact with placement settings. Recruitment social interactions involve how UK universities raise awareness of international opportunities to attract and select suitable candidates. IDEALS induction processes were divided into two phases: UK-based and in-country (Lusaka-Zambia) induction. Both phases generate social interactions between newly recruited UK volunteers and experienced Zambia volunteer leaders with the assistance of IDEALS alumni. Induction serves as a starting point for shaping volunteer identity and role formation as candidates are introduced to delivery approaches and cultural differences. The UK induction which is hosted annually in northeast England brings together students recruited from all participating universities. Programme delivery mechanisms in Zambia communities consists of a combination of sport and life skills sessions by both UK student volunteers and local peer leaders. Under the identified social processes, social interactions are produced which constantly construct or re-construct social identities (see Bhabha 1990).

a) Recruitment as a social process: addressing preconceptions and identity

Again, we highly commend Manley *et al.*'s (2016, p. 3) adoption of an interactionist perspective, an approach that would enable them to 'capture the negotiations, interactions and communications that exist' prior to deployment of UK student volunteers in local Zambian communities. Recruitment forms part of the technical perspectives in that the 'efficiency and inefficiency' of executing organisational intentions to recruit suitable candidates has a bearing on the 'achievement of

predefined objectives' (Goffman 1990, p. 232). However, Manley *et al.* neglected to critically examine recruitment processes from both global South and global North perspectives in order to analyse how volunteers construct and (re)construct 'notions of the programme, the work to be carried out and the 'role' of the volunteer' (2016, p. 387). In order to effectively examine the effect of external sources on 'role identity' and 'behaviour', the following recruitment process questions have an effect on volunteer role formation and identity: How are student volunteers made aware of opportunities to undertake international placements? What sort of language/terminologies is/are used to (re)present the plight of resource-poor host communities? How are international volunteering roles in resource-poor settings portrayed in promotional materials? Is recruitment driven by community-needs (bottom-up approach) or student-needs (top-down approach)? What is the influence of the programme's alumni community on recruitment?

Our findings show that one of the most acknowledged programme inefficiencies as voiced by a majority of the Directors of Sport from participating British universities was top-down recruitment:

One of our biggest weaknesses has been our selection of students, not that they have been bad students, but we have in the past put a student into a project and said, you are doing netball and the standard of netball on the placement is fantastic and the student's knowledge of the netball is not very good. That has been historically one of the problems

(UK Higher Education Director of Sport)

This technical inefficiency strongly relates to 'role disruption' identified by Manley *et al.* Further investigation of how preconceived notions of volunteer roles are shaped and tackled within the programme required examination of the involvement of local stakeholders in recruitment procedures to address the questions posed above. For

example, our findings based on local stakeholder social interactions reveal new insights regarding local resistance against top-down recruitment. Local agency evidently influenced recruitment, disrupted hegemonic tendencies and aligned recruitment to community needs rather than the student-focused needs or technical mismatches:

Initially, I think the approach was like maybe just sending volunteers without having discussed in which areas we wanted support in, then at some point we moved on, we came up to agree that we shall identify specific areas with which we need help (OYDC – Local Practitioner 2)

After five years down the line of the programme, we started to give them [UK Sport and participating universities] feedback, the students you send to us, for instance, you send me a swimmer in Kalingalinga [deprived residential area], how am I going to make use of that student, ...we had meetings before placements with a UK Sport representative (SIA Programme Leader)

We have meetings [with UK Sport representative] and look at their [volunteers] profile, we discuss so that we can also have a say if this particular student is suitable for this community (EduSport Programme Leader)

Manley *et al.* fail to demonstrate how local practitioners ‘contest, resist, divert and manipulate’ (Naz, 2006, p. 80) programme activities such as volunteer recruitment. The stakeholder voices above indicate developments towards a mixture of top-down and bottom-up recruitment approaches. Top-down approaches were mainly driven by a student employability ethos (see Powell (2011) for emphasis on graduate employability) while bottom-up approaches have been adopted in response to indications of local agency’s insistence to address community needs. Despite the benefits of a community-focussed (bottom-up) approach, the practical challenges of attracting suitable volunteers causes most UK universities to resort to a top-down approach. Hence, both global South and global North voices indicated how such practices tend to limit the potential mutual benefits to be accrued from the programme:

It is not a secret that the huge [individual] benefit is to the UK students, and a lot of them gain a lot of experience to earn them a good job,
(Local SfD Programme Manager)

An exchange programme for UK students but it's not really an exchange programme because it's a one way exchange of UK student visits to those communities. (UK International Inspiration Official)

While we acknowledge that Manley et al. have made valuable contributions to understanding volunteers' role formation, we suggest further uncovering of local agency's influence on technical perspectives of this closed volunteer social establishment would have shaded more light on their claims regarding the 'passivity' of local actors.

b) Induction as a social process: local actors' influence upon role formation and volunteer identity

Since Manley *et al.*'s purposed 'to expose the beliefs, values and meanings through which practitioners make sense of their experiences' (2016, p. 384), we propose that a critical examination of Zambian social actors' roles during the UK-based induction was required. The absence of critical examination of the social processes within which specific UK and Zambian social actors engaged collaboratively (Long, 2001) renders the authors' to claim that 'no predetermined 'front' had been established to which volunteer workers could adhere to', and subsequently, conclude that the programme lacked 'effective briefing for informed identity preparation and cultural acclimatization' (ibid, p. 388-390). To the contrary, our findings recognise the UK-based induction as the first social process offering opportunities to Zambian social actors to provide information for identity preparation and role formation:

I think the role of the Zambian team is basically to sort of look at the expectations of that group when they come to Zambia. What they are supposed to do, the cultural differences and how they can cope, it's basically a training done that prepares the UK student for the Zambian experience (EduSport Peer Leader)

Therefore, induction plays a significant role in respect of Goffman's (1990) cultural perspective which symbolic interactionist researchers employ to study social establishments. Thus, the IDEALS induction procedures relate to the sharing of 'moral values which influence activity in the [social] establishment' (ibid, p. 233). The cultural perspective intersects with the dramaturgical approach during the IDEALS induction as this is where the social establishments' moral standards are displayed and expected to be maintained by volunteers. We are fully aware that this stage is before the 'lived experiences' that Manley *et al.* focus on but argue that it plays a vital role in shaping the conceptualisation of volunteer roles in resource-poor localities. Despite the provided cultural induction, UK volunteers still reacted as if they were unaware of the anticipated cultural challenges whilst on placement:

When they [UK student volunteers] come here they experience that [begging] they start talking like they were not taught. So to me I feel a little bit bad ...that we thought that we had prepared you for this [extreme economic disparities between UK and Zambia] but you can't manage the adaptation (SfD Senior Manager – Zambian NGO).

While induction already serves as preparation for the challenges to be faced during actual volunteering on the ground, Manley *et al.* fail to demonstrate how global South actors significantly contribute to induction activities to provide 'greater calm for volunteers as they prepare to engage with SDP work' (Manley *et al.* 2016, p. 390). As the authors have used the dramaturgical approach, introducing theatrical spaces relating to a *back stage* and *front stage*, we argue that induction acts as a back stage that significantly influences both role and identity formation. Southern social actors tackle the preconceptions volunteers have prior to their engaging with Zambian

communities. Adopting a critical perspective to the deployment of volunteers and their subsequent engagement in local communities requires thorough interrogation of aspects of the back stage against the front stage experiences.

The technical perspective (Goffman 1990) also intersects with the dramaturgical perspective in relation to local agencies' setting of standards for volunteers working within Zambian communities. Apart from addressing cultural issues and challenging myths about social life within Zambian communities, local actors influence role identity when they direct induction activities. Since the programme's inaugural placements (in 2006), there has always been an active role accorded to southern actors to influence induction activities. For example, both cultural and technical perspectives can be observed from the social interactions and dialogue between global North and global South actors regarding role formation and expectations:

I think what has worked well is the issue of bringing all the Universities together, getting the local organisations from here [Zambia], getting to the UK telling them what we do, giving an opportunity to students to ask [questions]. ...the induction is usually dominated by what they are going to experience here, what kind of challenges they are going to have... (SfD Senior Manager – Zambian NGO).

... the UK guys prepare the games that they would like to share and also the Zambian guys will prepare the games that they would like to share. So it's more like on a culture exchange kind of thing (UK Student Volunteer)

Firstly at the induction ...they are given limited equipment and then they have to do a session with the rest of the students, to work out what they are going to do if they had lots of children or if they had only one ball with 30 children. (UK Student Volunteer – Alumni/Team Leader)

Manley *et al.* neglect to unpack the technical aspects (Goffman, 1990) intentionally organised to aid the achievement of the volunteering programme's predefined

objectives. By so doing, Manley *et al.* fail to identify global South actors' active role within these technical aspects. Instead, the privileged global North voices (see Spivak 1988, Kapoor 2004) utilised in both programme design and knowledge production renders the authors more space to label the citizenry in 'local Zambian communities as 'passive others' awaiting charitable aid' from foreign volunteers (Manley *et al.* 2016, p. 389).

Banda (2015) demonstrates that induction as a social process acts as an educational intervention which is crucial for 'unlearning' misconceptions and providing volunteers with an opportunity to learn from alternative voices (Spivak 1988). For example, alternative approaches to using traditional games to address social issues are shared during induction:

There are two people sent [to the UK induction] from [each] partner organisation – the Programmes Officer and a peer leader. So...the Programmes Officer will look at the management side of things whilst the peer leader will give the day to day running of activities in the sites. Basically, just looking at how they bring the life skills into games that they play because by then it was quiet a new concept with UK Sport teaching them how we can use traditional games in integrating life skills messages (EduSport Peer Leader)

The data from the IDEALS research (Banda 2015) demonstrates accommodation of global South voices' challenging SfD hegemonic tendencies through induction content development and delivery. The application of Goffman's dramaturgical approach by Manley *et al.* renders their actions vulnerable to Briggs and Sharp's (2004, p. 664) critique that global North academics use experiences in the South to construct knowledge 'without opening up the *process* to their knowledges, theories and explanations'. By so doing, Manley *et al.* seem to ignore programme contexts where alternative knowledges are not only shared but influence changes to programme design. Whilst we acknowledge that SfD literature has critiqued the lack of southern agency in programme development and knowledge production, Manley

et al.'s research practices exacerbate this 'notion' of the passivity of local practitioners. Therefore, as long as 'global North experts' and institutions continue to neglect to capture local agency or mute global South voices, such passivity will also continue to prevail in SfD research (see Spavik 1988, Saffari, 2016).

c) Delivery Mechanisms: effective role performance or identity disruption

To further Manley *et al.*'s application of a dramaturgical analysis of social interaction (Goffman 1961, 1990), we highlight the field of delivery as a front stage where all the induction rehearsals (back stage) are confronted with real life challenges. We continue to acknowledge the authors' contribution to SfD research since before their contribution, we are not aware of any study that has applied the concept of impression management in relation to volunteer 'identities' within SfD programme delivery (see also Schulenkorf, Sherry and Rowe 2016). The SfD delivery fieldwork is a valuable space to examine hegemonic relations between local communities and student volunteers. However, while advocating that SfD programmes 'ought to be subject to critical in-depth empirical analysis for future clarity and effective implementation' (Manley *et al.*, 2016, p. 398), the authors' approach to analysing delivery stage social interactions is limited in advancing such criticality. In order to advance such critical in-depth empirical analysis, we present below SfD delivery settings as social interactions occupied by local social actors who have an influence on volunteer identity, role formation or identity disruption.

If induction acts as a back stage or rehearsal phase, then the multiple front stages, the heterogeneous spaces, are stages where actual programme implementation occurs. These spaces are not void of local agency or local agency's reaction to hegemonic practices of global North volunteers as demonstrated by Manley *et al.* Notwithstanding part of the purpose of induction is to tackle specific misconceptions

and hegemonic tendencies, we acknowledge that such negative tendencies continue to manifest as these may only be superficially dealt with during back stage rehearsals.

Using Goffman's structural perspective, a social establishment has several social relationships linking it to other groups. Based on notions of status and powerⁱⁱⁱ, we identified vertical and horizontal social interactions between stakeholders. 'Vertical social interactions' are those between foreign organisations (i.e. international government agencies, international sports federations, development charities, foundations or corporate agencies) and locally-based community organisations in host nations. The foreign organisations' access to power/resources shapes the nature of vertical social interactions. Conversely, we term 'horizontal social interactions' as those identified between a micro-level organisation and its beneficiaries comprising of local people, youth leaders or grassroots institutions of similar status in power and influence. A critical interrogation of vertical social interactions helps connect 'macrological structures of power (that is, the global processes of capitalism, imperialism, and patriarchy) to the micrological textures of power' (Katz, 1992, p. 495) played out via horizontal social relations during SfD everyday social practices. Such horizontal social interactions among SfD micro-level actors occur in heterogeneous spaces comprising of: schools, community medical centres, and sports fields/playgrounds. For example, local social actors' awareness of the macrological forces, the 'dominant power relations and hierarchies that frame the sociopolitical constructs of international development work' (Manley *et al.* 2016, p. 397) insist on a level playing field during micro-level interactions:

We need to encourage a level playing field where the UK student will recognise that the Zambian peer leaders as partners in this and not students

of theirs... This is a two way thing, the Zambian peer leader has got experience and this is his/her [community] environment, OK. And the UK person is coming in with expertise or different sort of knowledge of how you can do certain things. And those that have come in open-minded to learn from Zambian have been the best partnerships over the years unlike those that have come like I'm here to teach you (EduSport Peer Leader)

Those who have come to change the world, that's where the challenge comes in, we talk about the issues in the schools where they are working, they are not working there as supervisors, they are working there as complementing what is already happening in those schools (SIA Programme Officer)

The global South voices above demonstrate resistance to reinforcing or conforming to global North dominance. Such global South perspectives are lacking despite Manley *et al.* emphasising the importance of analysing SDP from alternative narratives (global South). In comparison to Manley *et al.*'s findings, the voices above depict self-awareness of local expertise and knowledge from a global South perspective which Manley *et al.* did not capture.

Manley *et al.* justifiably base and draw much of their dramaturgical analysis on the programme delivery stage. However, our critical concern is the uneven and unequal attention towards local social actors. These social actors and their diverse relationships can potentially influence the production, reproduction and representation of both volunteer identities and their communal identities. Manley *et al.*'s social construction of identity provides a disproportionate presentation when they allow only global North volunteers to 'stage the world' of SfD micro-level delivery creating a political context (Goffman 1990, Spivak 1988) devoid of active local actors. Within the delivery stage, local actors also 'stage' their performances aiming to 'present particular notions of self [and those of UK student volunteers] towards their own communities' (Manley *et al.* 2016, p. 397):

Yeah, it happens that someone [UK student volunteer] has got less knowledge than I have and it's just a matter of saying, because we work together, always plan together, and at the end of the day, we'll not see who

has less knowledge and it will not be seen to other, but it will be a secret between the two of us (SIA Site Coordinator)

Here, we are presented with a local social actor who demonstrates that ‘conceptions of self and impression management are not to be considered unidirectional’ as is mainly demonstrated by the findings presented by Manley *et al.* (2016, p. 397).

Despite the authors’ focus on the front stage, the everyday life platform of SfD activities, Manley *et al.*’s attempt to highlight identities (role disruption) results in rendering the locals as objects rather than subjects of knowledge production.

Meanwhile, on the front stage, despite global North and global South actors ‘staging of the world’ simultaneously as shown above, Manley *et al.* seem to find it incommensurable to use subaltern or native voices to ‘reconstruct an alternative narrative’ (Clayton, 2004, p. 460) representing both global North volunteer identities and host community identities. The representation of local social actors (Long, 2001) that results from the social interactions on the front stage portrays the ‘other’ negatively from a skewed gaze without a critical attempt to present the underlining macrological structures of power fuelling global economic inequalities.

Conclusion

In this article we have responded to Manley *et al.* (2016) who, in their investigation of UK student volunteer experiences, provide a host of insightful yet controversial findings. We indicated how the authors’ employment of Goffman’s (1990) dramaturgical perspective which underpins their theoretical and methodological assumptions is laden with many shortcomings. While Manley *et al.*’s article is indeed limited in scope, without their contribution to the ever-growing field of SfD research, we could not have brought to bear our critical insights of its contemporary standing. As such, we echo further calls by SfD scholars (Darnell and Hayhurst, 2012, Black,

2010, Mwaanga and Mwansa, 2014) whom have already raised concerns over the nature of this research field and call ourselves for an increasingly critical engagement along the lines of what Manley *et al.* generally intend to convey.

As we conclude, we would like to echo Saffari's (2016, p. 42) imploration that the 'knowledge producer is not an objective observer, but always a subjective agent who engages in the construction of reality and whose engagement is determined by the particularities of her/his embeddedness in power structures'. We acknowledge our individual positions, situated in global North institutions, as being embedded in power structures, and that our attempts to challenge the SfD sector's hegemonic tendencies requires a conscious effort. For example, the fact that we are drawing our data from a commissioned research project by a global North funder demands that we are continuously aware of how that relationship with an SfD programme funder may continue to fuel marginalisation of global South situated SfD capable of undertaking similar foreign funded programme evaluations. SfD researchers interrogating hegemonic tendencies are cautioned to show a commitment to align their efforts to serving the needs, interests and self-determination of global South communities (Hayhurst 2009).

Driven by a diverse range of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations to engage in SfD theoretical debates, academics need not ignore their responsibility 'not to do harm' in their representation. Representation is at the core of development studies and as SfD researchers, we have to bear responsibility in how we add our viewpoints to the representations of resource-poor communities. Katz (1992, p. 496) warns us that as 'situated actors engaged in the political work of representation and the production of knowledge' we need to pay attention to the partialities of our representations.

To advance from theoretical debates featuring *power struggles*, *dominance* or *exploitation* within SfD research, practical integrity and academic career aspirations must always be harmonised. While the hegemonic debate within sport and development (Darnell and Hayhurst, 2012, Hartmann and Kwauk, 2011) has advanced beyond theoretical debates, tendencies by researchers to declare their lack of access to voices of the poor, marginalised or oppressed are the antithesis of the loud echoes for a transformative action in SfD research. Therefore, it is time we moved away from tendencies of subjugating local voices by simply stating our empirical research limitations in published works as such practices will continue to exclude subalterns from knowledge production. Therefore, further research must not only consider but actively involve the role of subalterns and demonstrate rejection or redressing of the universal and top-down nature of experiences captured in contemporary scholarship, institutional policy and eventual micro-level delivery.

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ⁱ We adopt sport for development (SfD) over development through sport (DtS), sport in development (SiD) and sport for social change (SfSC) to achieve consistency and given how renowned this terminology is among development agencies advocacy and policy documents.

ⁱⁱ International Inspiration (IN) is a UK charity that uses the power of sport to involve, inspire and impact young people around the world. It was established in 2013 after the merger of International Inspiration Foundation (IIF) and UK Sport's International Development through Sport (IDS). International Inspiration has since

ⁱⁱⁱ Notions of power in development are underpinned by access to resources and dependency of resource-poor communities on those with power. In the use of vertical and horizontal social interactions among stakeholders, we place those with resources as vertical partners and networks of recipient communities as horizontal partners.